MARVEL

3

TIERI
FLAVIANO
BLEE

ABSOLUTE CARNAGE

LETHAL PROTECTORS

WHILE INVESTIGATING DISINTERRED GRAVES IN DOVERTON, COLORADO--A TOWN ONCE TAKEN OVER BY THE SYMBIOTIC SERIAL KILLER NAMED CARNAGE--JOHN JAMESON BECAME INFECTED BY CARNAGE.

JOHN'S ONETIME PARTNER, MISTY KNIGHT, WAS HELD CAPTIVE BY CARNAGE AND HIS CREW. THEIR INTENT? FEED MISTY TO THE RESURRECTED DEMOGOBLIN, WHO IS IN THE BODY OF CARNAGE'S LOVER, SHRIEK, AND NOW GOES BY DEMAGOBLIN!

MISTY, AFTER USING HER BIONIC ARM TO ESCAPE, IS TRAPPED IN THE SEWERS FACE-TO-FACE WITH DEMAGOBLIN AND A CARNAGE-IZED MAN-WOLF...BUT NOT BEFORE GETTING A CALL OUT TO IRON FIST, WHO HAS GATHERED A TEAM TO RESCUE HER!

ABSOLUTE CARNAGE

LETHAL PROTECTORS

WARNING: THE EVENTS OF THIS STORY TAKE PLACE *AFTER* **ABSOLUTE CARNAGE #1** & **#2.** IF YOU HAVEN'T READ THEM YET, PROCEED AT YOUR OWN RISK!

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SUPER HERO LIFE CAN BE A LONELY EXISTENCE AT TIMES.

SURE, THERE'RE FRIENDS IN THE COMMUNITY THAT YOU SEE NOW AND THEN, BUT IT'S NOT LIKE THERE'S SUPER HERO COMPANY PICNICS OR AVENGERS-SPONSORED BOWLING NIGHTS.

FOR THE MOST PART YOU'RE OUT THERE BY YOURSELF DOING YOUR OWN THING.

FOR THE MOST PART, THE ONLY TIME YOU SEE EACH OTHER IS WHEN THE REALLY BAD STUFF IS GOING DOWN.

TAKE THESE PEOPLE, FOR EXAMPLE. THE LAST TIME I SAW THEM ALL TOGETHER LIKE THIS, THE REALLY BAD STUFF WAS IN THE FORM OF ***CARNAGE*** AND HIS CRONIES RUNNING RAMPANT ALL OVER NYC.

WE BEAT THE BASTARD. SAVED THE CITY.

WON THE DAY BACK THEN...

I DON'T KNOW IF WE'RE GOING TO BE SO LUCKY THIS TIME.

BLAM!

BLAM!

BLAM!

BLAM!

BLAM!

BLAM!

BLAM!

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AND THE WORST PART IS, I'M THE ONE WHO BROUGHT US ALL BACK TOGETHER.

I'M THE ONE ***RESPONSIBLE.***

WE'VE BEEN AT THIS FOR ***HOURS,*** IRON FIST...

...FIGHTING WAVE UPON WAVE OF THESE...***THINGS.*** AND THERE'S NO SIGN OF ***MISTY KNIGHT*** ANYWHERE.

ARE WE SURE THAT SHE'S DOWN HERE? AS MUCH AS I HATE TO SAY IT...ARE WE SURE SHE'S STILL ALIVE?

GEEZ...MORBID MUCH, MORBIUS? (WELL, I GUESS THAT IS ALMOST PART OF YOUR NAME.) ANYWAY...

I ***KNOW*** MISTY KNIGHT. AND I ***KNOW*** SHE'S STILL ALIVE.

BUT ***WE*** WON'T BE FOR MUCH LONGER IF WE DON'T GET THESE MONSTROSITIES UNDER CONTROL. MY FIRE HAS ALWAYS AFFECTED THEM IN THE PAST, SO MAYBE A RING OF IT WILL DO THE TRICK.

AAAAND...SO MUCH FOR THAT, FIRESTAR.

THEY JUST KEEP COMING. NO REGARD FOR THEIR OWN WELL-BEING WHATSOEVER.

NOTHING'S STOPPING THEM.

I MAY HAVE SOMETHING.

CHOOO

"...AND SEE IF WE CAN FIND MISTY IN THIS MESS. LORD ONLY KNOWS WHAT SHE'S BEEN GOING THROUGH DOWN HERE."

THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU'RE DOING, JOHN.

OH, HE'S THINKING, *"MEAT..."*

HE'S THINKING ABOUT HOW MUCH OF YOU SHOULD REMAIN ***UNEATEN*** TO BRING BACK AS PROOF TO OUR LORD CARNAGE THAT YOU'VE BEEN DEALT WITH ***ONCE AND FOR ALL***.

GGRRRRRRRR!

IF THAT'S THE CASE... THEN WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR, JOHN?

DO IT.

THE LUNCH HAS A POINT, JOHN JAMESON...

FINISH HER ALREADY!

I...
I...

BAH! WEAK DOG.

ZAP!

NEVER SEND A PUP TO DO A DEMON'S JOB, APPARENTLY.

I'LL SEND YOU TO HELL MYSELF.

CHOOSH!

SOMEHOW I BELIEVE...

AHHHHH!

...THAT IS A TRIP YOU'LL BE BOOKING ALONE, DEMON.

OR TO PUT IT ANOTHER WAY...

BACK THE #$%& AWAY FROM MISTY.

NOW.

WELL...LOOK WHO FINALLY DECIDED TO SHOW UP. WAS STARTING TO GET A LITTLE WORRIED THERE, TO BE HONEST.

YOU SHOULD BE MORE THAN JUST A LITTLE WORRIED, MORTAL.

NOW PERHAPS YOU CAN MAKE YOURSELF USEFUL FOR ONCE, MAN-WOLF...

KILL SOMETHING!

HMM. A WEREWOLF VERSUS A VAMPIRE. AND ME WITHOUT MY POPCORN AND OVERPRICED CANDY.

AND ME WITHOUT A CLEAR SHOT. TRYING TO SEND FIDO OVER HERE TO THAT BIG KENNEL IN THE SKY. IF ONLY TWILIGHT COULD ACTUALLY COOPERATE AND HOLD HIM STILL!

NOT LIKE I'M NOT TRYING, DEATHLOK!

TRY HARDER, 'CAUSE OUR CUTE LITTLE MONSTER MATINEE JUST TURNED INTO A FULL-FLEDGED HORROR MOVIE.

GREAT. THESE GUYS AGAIN.

WELL THEN... ALLOW ME TO AT LEAST TAKE ***ONE*** PIECE OFF THE BOARD.

EAT HEAT, GOBLIN!

HA! AS IF YOUR PATHETIC FLAMES WERE A MATCH FOR MINE, MUTANT WITCH.

TASTE MY FIRE, PRODUCED FROM THE VERY DEPTHS OF HELL ITSELF!

AHHHH!

TASTE IT AS IT ROASTS YOUR VERY BONES, FIRESTAR!

I HAVE TO SAY...

BLAM!!!
BLAM!
BLAM!
BLAM!
BLAM!
BLAM!
...YOU MUST BE A **HELL** OF A LOT OF FUN AT PARTIES.
PFFT. LIKE I'D GO TO ANY PARTY SHE'D BE AT.
EH. I'VE BEEN TO WORSE.
NOT ALL THAT SURPRISING. NOW HAND ME ONE OF THOSE GUNS, WILL YA?
BLAM!
BLAM!
ROOM FOR ONE MORE?
HEY, ROOM FOR WHATEVER IT TAKES, DAGGER...
...AS LONG AS WE END THIS EVIL #$%@ ONCE AND FOR ALL.
DON'T WANT TO JINX US, BUT...
...LOOKS LIKE WE DID IT.
WELL, YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY, SILLY GIRL...
LOOKS CAN BE DECEIVING!

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SCREEEE

MAN-WOLF... CLEARLY THERE IS CONFLICT WITHIN YOU. WE ***ALL*** SAW IT.

BUT IF MISTY KNIGHT IS TO LIVE...

...THAT CONFLICT MUST END NOW.

I...I CAN'T.

CARNAGE... ***KNULL.*** THEY... WILL ***DISCIPLINE*** ME. WILL ***HURT*** ME.

THEY... THEY...

...CAN GO ***STRAIGHT TO HELL!***

BOOOM!

LET'S FINALLY GET YOU OUT OF HERE, MISTY.

JOHN...

SEEMS TO HAVE COME TO HIS SENSES!

WE HAVE MUCH BIGGER PROBLEMS TO DEAL WITH AT THE MOMENT-- THOSE CREATURES HAVE JUST RECEIVED REINFORCEMENTS!

AND THEN SOME!

NO!

I'M NOT LEAVING HERE WITHOUT JOHN!

FZZZZ!

RARRRGHH!

MISTY, HE'S VERY JEKYLL AND HYDE, AND IF YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED RIGHT NOW, WE DON'T EXACTLY HAVE THE TIME TO WAIT AROUND FOR HIM TO GET HIMSELF RE-JEKYLLIZED.

DESPITE ALL HE'S DONE, HE'S STILL IN THERE, DAMN IT!

WE ALSO DO NOT HAVE TIME TO BICKER AMONG OURSELVES, DANIEL RAND.

AND WITH THAT IN MIND...

POOF!

...I'M MAKING THE DECISION FOR US ALL.

NO, DAMN IT ALL...

NOOOOOO!

HOPE WE DIDN'T JUST MAKE A VERY BIG MISTAKE, CLOAK.

RAAAARRRRR!

GUESS THAT ANSWERS THAT.

STOP!

MISTY...

EASY NOW.

GIVE IT A CHANCE.

MISTY...

...I'M SO... CONFLICTED...

DON'T EVEN KNOW... WHO...

...OR WHAT I AM... ANYMORE...

YOU ARE JOHN JAMESON...

SON OF J. JONAH "GET ME PICTURES OF THAT WALL-CRAWLING MENACE" JAMESON.

ALSO PLAYED SPACE COWBOY FOR A BIT. AND IT'S THERE YOU FOUND THE ***GOD-STONE,*** THE ONE THING THAT WOULD CHANGE YOUR LIFE ***FOREVER...***

...BY TURNING YOU INTO ***MAN-WOLF.***

FROM "AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN SPACE," EVENTUALLY YOU ENDED UP BECOMING THE HEAD OF SECURITY AT ***RAVENCROFT,*** AND WELL...

...THAT'S WHERE YOU FIRST ENCOUNTERED ***CARNAGE.***

AND DESPITE EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED, EVERYTHING YOU'VE DONE IN HIS NAME...

...YOU ARE ALSO...

...MY ***FRIEND.***

NEW YORK CITY.
AN UNDISCLOSED FACILITY.

SUPER HERO LIFE CAN BE A LONELY EXISTENCE AT TIMES.

SURE, THERE'RE FRIENDS IN THE COMMUNITY THAT YOU SEE NOW AND THEN. BUT IT'S NOT LIKE THERE'S SUPER HERO COMPANY PICNICS OR AVENGERS-SPONSORED BOWLING NIGHTS.

FOR THE MOST PART, YOU'RE OUT THERE BY YOURSELF DOING YOUR OWN THING.

FOR THE MOST PART, THE ONLY TIME YOU SEE EACH OTHER IS WHEN THE REALLY BAD STUFF IS GOING DOWN.

BUT SOMETIMES, JUST ***SOMETIMES...***

...YOU'RE THERE FOR THE GOOD STUFF TOO.

AND THOSE ARE THE ***BEST*** PARTS.

SPECIAL AGENT KNIGHT...

WE'RE READY TO BEGIN THE DEBRIEFING PROCESS NOW.

HOURS LATER.

ABOUT TIME YOU SHOWED UP, KNIGHT. WHAT THE @#$% IS GOING ON HERE? WHO ARE THESE SUPERIORS OF YOURS, AND WHAT *IS* THIS PLACE?

NOT EXACTLY A BIG FAN OF SECRET, SHADOWY ORGANIZATIONS, IF YOU WEREN'T AWARE.

I'M AWARE. BUT "NEED TO KNOW" AND ALL THAT.

AND RIGHT NOW WE DON'T NEED TO KNOW. YEAH, YEAH, YEAH. ANYWAY, MORE IMPORTANTLY...

HOW'S JOHN?

WHY DON'T YOU ASK HIM YOURSELF?

IT'S GOOD TO HAVE YOU BACK, JOHN. THE ***REAL*** YOU. I'LL ADMIT, I DIDN'T THINK THAT WAS POSSIBLE.

HEY, ***I'LL*** ADMIT I DIDN'T THINK SO MYSELF EITHER.

SO YOU DON'T MIND IF I KEEP MY HAND ON MY GUN, THEN, JUST IN CASE, RIGHT?

DON'T BE AN ASS.

I'M HAPPY TO SAY JOHN HAS OFFICIALLY BEEN CLEARED OF ALL FORMS OF THE CARNAGE VIRUS. HE CAN BE FULLY TRUSTED NOW.

AS SUCH, HE'S ALSO BEEN FULLY DEBRIEFED. LET'S JUST SAY I'M A LOT LESS HAPPY WITH HOW THAT TURNED OUT.

TELL THEM WHAT YOU TOLD US, JOHN.

I WENT THROUGH MY MEMORIES, THROUGH EVERYTHING I KNEW ABOUT CARNAGE AND WHAT HIS PLANS ARE, AND THERE WAS UNFORTUNATELY ONLY ONE CONCLUSION I COULD OFFER...

HE'S GOING TO WIN.

WELL, THAT SUCKS.

IT ALSO DOESN'T CHANGE A DAMNED THING. I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THE REST OF YOU...

...BUT I'M TAKING THE FIGHT TO THIS EVIL SON OF A @#%$ ANYWAY.

I BELIEVE YOU SPEAK FOR US ALL.

YEP.

GOOD THING I DON'T LIKE ANY OF YOU, SINCE CLEARLY WE'RE ALL GOING TO DIE.

FUNNY...

...WE WERE ALL JUST GOING TO SAY THE SAME THING ABOUT YOU.

TO BE CONTINUED IN ABSOLUTE CARNAGE #5!

CLETUS' CLUBHOUSE

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SEND EMAILS TO **SPIDEYOFFICE@MARVEL.COM** (PLEASE MARK "OKAY TO PRINT"!)

Hello in here, out there, around the world and aboard all the ships at sea!

Veditor Devin Lewis reporting to you live and in print from Marvel HQ in the heart of New York!

As I write this, ABSOLUTE CARNAGE #4 has just gone to the printer, and it's the best issue yet!

Enough gabbing from me, though. You Venomaniacs out there in Mighty Marveldom have been keeping up with ABSOLUTE CARNAGE each and every step of the way--and writing the letters to prove it! So let's get to 'em!

Dearest Cletus' Clubhouse Guardians,

Congrats again to Donny Cates, Ryan Stegman and all the lovelies involved with VENOM and ABSOLUTE CARNAGE for creating yet another exciting comic book ride. My first exposure to Mr. Cates was his incredible run on THANOS WINS, where he created my absolute fave new(ish?) character: Cosmic Ghost Rider. When I heard he was switching to VENOM next, only my absolute fave Marvel character of all time, I knew I had to get on board.

I must admit, at first I wasn't sure if I was on board with this whole Knull, god and creator of the symbiotes, but I kept my faith and hung around. The WEB OF VENOM one-offs were what really teased my curiosity as to where it was going and what excitement would ensue. Well, two issues deep into ABSOLUTE CARNAGE and I must consume it all. Between you guys and Hickman, I'm gonna need a second job...and it will be worth it. Thanks for all the good reads! Make Mine Murder and let Carnage paint the town red...'cuz, "listen, all you fools, don't you know that Carnage Rulez!"

Yours in slobber,
Raylo

Dear ABSOLUTE CARNAGE Creative Team,

I have to thank you guys. For the past few months, I sort of stopped reading comics. I had other things that required more immediate attention, notably school. Then, when I decided to finally go out to get some more comics, just a few hours ago, in fact, your series was the first one that caught my eye. I bought the first two issues and subsequently devoured them, looking over every detail. It is perfect. The artwork is gorgeous, highlighting each character's emotions and perfectly capturing the terror that is Carnage. The pacing of the story is grand, allowing time for character moments, while still giving us the action-packed symbiote fights that Venom, Spidey and other web-slingers' fans know and love. And, above all, it's terrifying, and I mean that in the best way possible.

About a week ago, I re-read AMAZING SPIDER-MAN's 300th issue, which, as you undoubtedly know, marked Venom's first appearance, and I was reminded of why everyone fell in love with the character. This comic book, as well as the VENOM series, are reminding me of why that character has resonated with me, and with so many other fans, I'm sure, while still managing to evolve him and make him into something new. That's no easy feat. So thank you. Thank you for everything you have done so far. May you continue to bring Carnage to the world. #carnagerules

Sincerely,
Ben R.

To everyone working on ABSOLUTE CARNAGE, the series so far is BRUTALITY AMAZING! I'm a new fan to comic books, just started picking them up right before WAR OF THE REALMS started, and I'm fortunate enough to be here for what seems to be the most metal event of all time! CARNAGE RULES!!!

Dan D.

Dear ABSOLUTE CARNAGE Team,

I'm just speechless with how amazing this whole event is turning out! So far every issue including the tie-ins are awesome in explaining the story. The art in ABSOLUTE CARNAGE is just stunning and in my opinion Stegman's best work yet! This story gets crazier and crazier and it feels like our heroes don't stand a chance at stopping Carnage. Just when you think our heroes are ahead of the game, Carnage is more ahead than them! Also that bomb being dropped of Dylan having a codex should make this event more exciting in upcoming issues. Can't wait to read the next issue and appreciate the work everyone has put in to make this happen!

Sincerely,
Steve

Greetings, Spidey-Office,

I just finished reading the first chapter of ABSOLUTE CARNAGE. I was beyond impressed with the story and art. I showed my kids the cover art of ABSOLUTE CARNAGE #1 and explained the plot and characters to them and their eyes just lit up. Their reactions reminded me of how I was when I read my first Spider-Man, Venom and Carnage comics over 25 years ago. My first introduction to Spider-Man, Venom and Carnage came from AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #375, VENOM: LETHAL PROTECTOR #1, *Wizard Magazine* #18 and SPIDER-MAN UNLIMITED #1 (1993 was a huge year for Spidey, Venom, and Carnage). The gorgeous art and larger-than-life characters captured my imagination. Few books have made me experience such excitement and intrigue as those books. I am overjoyed to say that ABSOLUTE CARNAGE #1 took me right back to those same feelings I had as a kid. Seeing Peter, Eddie, and Cletus and their colorful personalities front and center was a pleasure to behold. I wanted to say thank you for the fantastic job everyone does on these books and to keep up the outstanding work.

Sincerely a Very Grateful Spidey, Venom and Carnage fan,

Richard P.
Madison, AL

Hi, VENOM Team!

I'm pretty new to actually reading comics, and my senior copywriter suggested I start with VENOM #1. I'm four issues in and I'm insanely impressed with Donny Cates, Ryan and the rest of the team. It's a stunning book with a well-paced story so far and the tone is perfect (in my opinion) for a character as gray as Venom. Well done!

Loïs

Hey Team Venom,

Just finished ABSOLUTE CARNAGE #1 and was absolutely blown away. It's amazing that Venom debuted in AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #300 all those years ago, yet he's still one of the best and most original characters ever created in comic book history. You guys did such a great job of making Venom an actual hero instead of just an antihero, and he still has this extremely rugged and tough edge to him. It's always fun to see Venom team up with Spidey ("Eddie...no killing") and you guys do a great job with their "friendship." The back-and-forth banter between Spider-Man and Venom is not only funny and poignant, but there seems to be a lot of trust between the two characters in this issue that is both different and unique. The artwork and coloring is beautiful, and the red really stands out! Cletus Kasady is a sadistic killer, and having him trying to spread the symbiote to other characters is a stroke of genius. I am holding ABSOLUTE CARNAGE #2 in my hand right now and cannot wait to start it. I look forward to this story and how it plays out over the next few months! Bravo!

Kevin from Boston

Hello to everyone at the Spidey-Office!

My name is Logan, and I have to say I am very impressed with the ABSOLUTE CARNAGE event and all its tie-ins. ABSOLUTE CARNAGE #1 was actually the first Venom comic I've ever read, and I loved every page. It was generally terrifying, and every page was easily some of the most visually appealing and creative art I've seen in a comic before. That one page with Cletus strutting down the hall in Ravencroft with all the patients there screaming sent shivers down my spine as I read it. I was also thoroughly disturbed and utterly amazed at the artwork in SEPARATION ANXIETY #1, the colors really popped out from the black-and-red background, and the attention to detail was jaw-dropping. The ABSOLUTE CARNAGE VS. DEADPOOL was hilarious too. Keep up the awesome work you guys are doing at the Spidey-Office!!!

With Sincere Fear,
Logan

ABSOLUTE CARNAGE: SCREAM #1 was a SCREAMing good time! Seeing both of my favorite girls, Andi and Scream, in one place blew me away! I'm so happy to see both of them back in action! This event is bring back so many underused characters! Thank you all so much for it! I can't wait for Scream's ongoing!

Alison C.

Dear Venom Team,

I've only been reading comics for a couple years now so I'm pretty new to the comics scene. However, one of the first books I picked up when I started reading was VENOMIZED #1. Such a great series and really what got me into Venom. When Donnie's VENOM #1 released I was hooked. I've picked up every issue since.

This ABSOLUTE CARNAGE run is LITERALLY BLOWING MY MIND. I've picked up multiple copies of each issue and tie-in to mail to my friends so that they're not missing out. I can't help but wonder what will happen if/when Knull is awakened. All the stuff going on in SILVER SURFER: BLACK has me questioning everything.

I am curious, is there any chance we might get to see Cosmic Ghost Rider in this amazing run? His crossing with Carnage at the end of CGDTM was one of my favorite couple pages I've ever read. Fingers crossed!

Carnage rules!

J. Shouse

Dear Venom office,

I just finished reading VENOM #18, and I love it. I am big fan of the symbiotes and I can't wait to see what happens next. I am also glad to see that the Life Foundation symbiotes are getting a bit of love, and I hope that they stay with their new hosts; I love their new designs. My favorite symbiote is Phage and I like his host too; please keep him around, he is awesome.

Also I want to say that I really like your art. Mr. Stegman, it is awesome.

I have only read ABSOLUTE CARNAGE #1 and the Symbiote Spider-Man crossover, but I instantly loved the series and can't wait for more Carnage. Carnage is one of my favorites so I knew I would love the series, but I didn't know I would love it this much!!! I am so happy to be able to read this series and can't wait for the chapters to come!!! But why did you choose to make a series about Carnage? What gave you the idea? CARNAGE RULES!!!

Hunter B.

PHEW!

What a load of lovely letters. Thanks so much for reading and for writing, everyone! And keep 'em coming! We've still got plenty of tricks up our sleeves as we head into November and the last lethal issue of ABSOLUTE CARNAGE!

Remember to tell your comic shop that you want the best, and the best is CARNAGE!

#CarnageRules

Stay sharp!
Devin
@edevinlewis

ABSOLUTE CARNAGE #5

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